

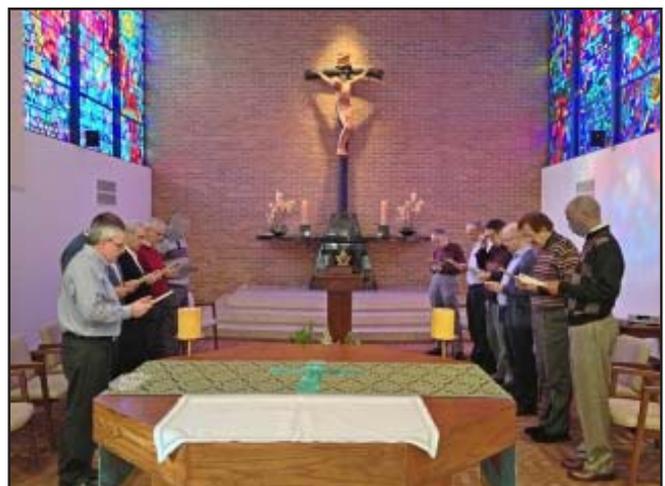


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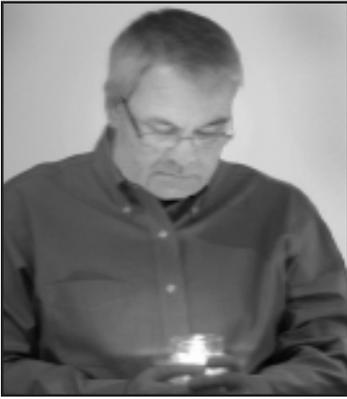
February, 2013

Last January 22nd, a Canadian Clipper cold front invaded Chicago just in time to greet the EGC participants as they deplaned at O'Hare Field. Those less accustomed to the cold biting winds were happy to quickly take refuge in the heated automobiles that would take them to the Viatorian Province Center in Arlington Heights. All had unpacked their bags before the official opening took place at a celebration inspired by the inopportune visit of Jesus' family: *Your mother and your brothers are outside...* (Luke 8:19-21).

I chose this text from Saint Luke to open this Extraordinary General Council for two reasons: it speaks to us about those who surround Jesus, which includes ourselves, and also about those who want to see Jesus, which likewise includes us. It speaks to us of the family that we constitute, which includes ourselves, as well as of the family that we are called upon to become, to which we are strongly invited. Even more so, it challenges us directly about the extent of our feeling of belonging at the service of one and the same charism. (Extract from the Opening Message of the Superior General.)



Over the course of the seven-day EGC meeting, frank discussions manifested a firm willingness to provide follow-up steps to last summer's General Chapter. Additionally, this time provided an opportunity for the General Council members, the new superior of the Delegation of France, and the four Provincial Superiors to come into contact with the Viatorians of the Chicago Province. That experience, which was greatly appreciated, will bring us, in the future, to other places. An outstanding welcome awaited our group.



To Tom and to the Province of Chicago, I wish to express our gratitude with words that are sincere and filled with astonishment, words that are as touching as the excellent welcome that you have reserved for us. Thank you, Tom, as we proclaim, loud and clear, how beautiful, warm, and extremely generous is the Province Center of the Chicago Viatorians. (Extract from the Closing Message of the Superior General.)

In the time following a General Chapter, there is no shortage of topics to be treated. A full agenda occupied the ten participants and the two translators until the final afternoon. Please allow us to highlight here the careful and voluminous work accomplished by Dudley Pierre and John Peeters, our two translators:

I could not conclude this message without offering sincere gratitude to our two translators, John and Dudley. Their task is difficult and calls for a great deal of patience and humility. Translating what another person is saying sometimes becomes a kind of miracle, especially when the ideas are not the clearest. You did excellent work under practical conditions that were not necessarily ideal. John, the master, and Dudley, the novice, both proved that they have what is essential for accomplishing that task: the necessary skills and a love for their community. Thank you very much to both of you! (Extract from the Closing Message of the Superior General.)



The present issue of **Viator Web** will strive to present several conclusions drawn from the topics studied and especially to show you the joy experienced by the ten EGC members in sharing their passion for the Viatorian Community and their willingness to promote its development.

<p>General Chapter</p>	<p>In addition to reviewing the evaluations made by those who participated in last summer’s General Chapter, the EGC members expressed their personal points of view. Certain decisions were made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Considering the uncertainty about the availability of the <i>Casa Divin Maestro</i> in Ariccia in 2018, each one will begin looking for another site for the 2018 General Chapter. Limited personnel in Rome and the many needs occasioned by a chapter prompt us to explore the possibility of holding the chapter in one of our provinces. • The evaluation indicated clearly that the chapter members felt that they were under extreme time constraints. Consequently, the decision was made to extend the chapter to eighteen days. • The committee of the chapter (EGC), when it comes time to plan the program and the various steps, will try to place greater emphasis on a chosen theme.
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<p>Economic Questions and Global Proposal</p>	<p>The General Council had presented to the EGC members a text that tried to offer a global response to the General Chapter’s concern about the economic situation of the Congregation and the request to establish an International Development Office for the Mission. That effort was appreciated and gave rise to lengthy discussions. At first sight, that was to be the main course (<i>plat de résistance</i>). Even though all recognized the value of that document with regard to the chapter decisions and texts, it was not possible to come to a satisfactory consensus for the moment. The commentaries expressed and the nuances invoked by the concerned superiors with regard to the financial urgency calling for an imminent change in our ways of financing our foundations made it necessary to reconsider our approach with a view to setting up the aforementioned International Office. This subject will be treated again at the 2014 EGC meeting.</p> <p>In order for us to have information that is precise and based upon common criteria, it is asked that each national community of the Congregation proceed with an audit and an actuarial study. The data thus obtained will enable us to have a more precise idea of the real economic situation of the International Congregation and to plan for necessary adjustments.</p>
<p>Financial Participation of All Viatorians in the Functioning of the Viatorian Community</p>	<p>General Chapter Text No. 9 uses very specific language: it strongly urges the different instances of the Community to assure financial participation by all Viatorians in the functioning of the Community. Consequently, each provincial superior and the superior of the Delegation of France will have to present, at the 2014 EGC meeting, the solution decided upon for their entity and the criteria used to arrive at their decision.</p>
<p>Mandates and Committees</p>	<p>The reaction is almost automatic: the General Chapter gives a mandate – and a committee must be created. Thus, a certain number of committees will be established over the course of the coming months:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With a view to evaluating the general structure of the Congregation, a central committee will be formed. It will first of all have to establish the criteria necessary for evaluating the structure of the Congregation on all its levels, from the foundations to the General Council, including interprovincial organisms (CLAC and CCVAO) as well. Locally, another committee (chosen by the local councils) will see to it that the evaluation is made and that the results are transmitted to the central committee. • The theme of vocation ministry is very much present in the Chapter Acts. A committee will be given the task of redacting a document for the entire Community, after the example of the <i>Ratio Formationis</i>, establishing a framework of reference for vocation ministry.

<p>Mandates and Committees (end)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next General Assembly will take place in February, 2016, in Spain. The EGC members decided to set up a committee of Viatorians responsible for responding to the precise mandates contained in Chapter Acts 5.2 and 24.3. It will be a question of defining the mandate, the competencies, the representativity, the operating rules and regulations, and the frequency of the Assembly of the Viatorian Community. Additionally, the question of leadership needs to be clarified.
<p>Commitment Formula of Viatorian Associates</p>	<p>Each provincial superior and the superior of the Delegation of France agree to study a proposed modification in the commitment formula of Viatorian associates in order to translate the full extent of that commitment while, at the same time, avoiding any juridical bond with the Congregation. This theme will be treated again at the 2014 EGC meeting.</p>
<p>International Financial Assistance for the Ivory Coast</p>	<p>Over the course of the last three years, in response to a request from the Delegation of France, the International Viatorian Community has made a commitment to finance the Ivory Coast Vice-Delegation. The economic fragility of the Delegation of France and the impact of the social upheaval in the Ivory Coast called for that gesture of sharing, in which all participated. The three-year agreement came to an end in August, 2012.</p> <p>After a study of the situation furnished by Father Léon Desbos conjointly with the General Treasurer, it was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to extend, for the 2012-2013 fiscal year, international assistance in the amount of 84,000 € (\$105,000). That amount will be equally divided between the Delegation of France (50%) and international assistance (50%). • Over the course of the coming months, the General Treasurer, in cooperation with the chief financial officer of the Ivory Coast, will work to establish a realistic budget for the next two years. That budget will have to be presented to the superiors of the provinces and of the delegation. A longer-term decision will be made before August, 2013.
<p>Sexual Abuse</p>	<p>The theme of acts of sexual abuse committed by religious against minors occasioned an enriching exchange of ideas. Each provincial superior and the delegate of France presented the state of that question in their respective territories, as well as in the foundations under their responsibility. It was asked that each province, delegation, vice-delegation, and foundation establish, in cooperation with the competent authorities, two policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first policy with a view to preventing acts of sexual abuse, that is, to making Viatorians aware of a security environment in that respect and of attitudes that are no longer acceptable. • A second policy establishing the steps to be followed when there are situations of sexual abuse committed against minors or when there is a complaint along those lines.
<p>Next EGC Meeting</p>	<p>The EGC will meet next in Canada from June 16th to 23rd, 2014.</p>

Additionally, information was shared about the publication of the Chapter Acts, the study relative to the location of the General House, and the completion of the report of the committee of experts by June, 2014. The General Council presented the proposed dates of its pastoral visits, as well as various elections scheduled to be held in the provinces and the delegation. Finally, the General Treasurer informed the EGC members about the General House's new Internet site, which will soon be coming online and will become the preferred tool for communications.

Proposed Pastoral Visits by the General Council:

2013

- February/March: Burkina Faso
- **April: Elections in the USA**
- September/October: Colombia

2014

- January/February: Haiti
- **May: Elections in Canada**
- **September: Elections in Chile**
- September/October: Spain

2015

- January: Ivory Coast
- March: Belize and Honduras
- September: Canada
- November: Chile

2016

- February: Third General Assembly in Spain
- **April: Elections in Spain**
- **June: Superior of the Delegation of France**
- September: United States
- November: Peru

2017

- January/February: Bolivia
- **April: Elections in the USA**
- September/October: Japan and Taiwan
- November: France

2018

- General Chapter
- **Elections in Canada**
- **Elections in Chile**

The Closing Message of the Superior General, Father Alain Ambeault, reflected the spirit in which this meeting was held. Additionally, he shared his convictions at the conclusion of this important international meeting. There follows a short extract from the complete text, which is available at the General Direction's web site under the heading of "News."

All of us prepared ourselves well for this meeting, at which the topics to be treated were not only numerous, but also important. Throughout these last eight days, we kept our eyes fixed upon our chapter decisions and texts, which served as beacons of the efforts that we must make, as challenges that we must face, as pathways to conversion, as confirmations of our ways of acting. That is, indeed, the expression of ultimate authority in our congregation. The leadership that we must provide, on the level of the provinces or of the General Council, must move in the direction of a total openness to those calls and to their implementation everywhere that we live and work.

Our faithfulness to the calls of the General Chapter must be the most beautiful expression of Viatorian International Solidarity. We are not a confederation of independent states, but rather a congregation that must have the same points of reference and a close relationship among all its entities. The level of autonomy of the provinces with respect to the General Council and of the foundations with respect to their mother provinces, as well as of the vice-delegation with respect to the delegation, has no other purpose than to nourish the rich diversity of all Viatorians and their essential unity, from which flows the mission of the Superior General and his council. However, that mission cannot be carried out – and we would all be missing something if it were not carried out – without a complete acceptance of your pastoral role in your respective milieux. You do accept it – and for that I am grateful. The wonderful graces that are offered to us on the occasion of meetings such as the one that is now concluding are the result of a suspension of our immediate responsibilities in order to better put on the mantle of a common responsibility. In that respect, the EGC has made significant progress over these past years, even though additional efforts must still be made. (Extract from the Closing Message of the Superior General.)

Several Souvenir Photos:





An Important Step Forward in the Cause of Father Querbes

For quite some time we have been insistently asking Father Daniel Ols, O.P., the *relator* (reporter), to read the documents that we have given him. We wanted to know if those documents could be considered as definitive or if modifications had to be made. Finally, on January 26, 2013, Father Ols gave us his personally signed *Prænotatio Relatoris* (reporter's preliminary proposal), a rather succinct document, but very well worked out, in which he presents the *Positio* (position paper) on the life, the virtues, and the reputation for holiness of Servant of God Jean Louis Joseph Marie Querbes. In so doing, the *relator* recognizes that our work has been completed. He agrees to have the document edited and presented to different Vatican experts, who will study it in great depth.

Father Ols notes in his *Prænotatio* that, when he was given responsibility for directing this cause, the first document that he received was Robert Bonnafous' excellent biography of the Servant of God, entitled **Un Fondateur Contrarié**, which presents all of the characteristics required for a well-documented biography. He asked, at that time, that the biography be an integral part of the *Positio*. Therefore, there will be forty or fifty copies of the *Positio* deposited in the Vatican. From what we understand, contrary to what is usually done for all causes, we will not have to present another documented biography. It will suffice for us to include a rather brief biography.

The *Positio* is composed of two parts: the *Informatio* and the *Summarium*. The *Informatio* contains all the arguments necessary to remove any *Dubium* (doubt). The historical experts and the theologians must have the assurance that, in fact, Father Querbes lived out the theological virtues, the cardinal virtues, the virtues of religious life, and other virtues. The reputation for holiness that Father Querbes has enjoyed, from the time of his death up until the present time, must also be verified. The *Summarium*, for its part, is composed of duly authenticated documents proving everything that is affirmed in the first part.

All of this doubtlessly constitutes a very important step forward in the process of the cause. It was not easy to arrive at this point, since Father Ols, the only French-speaking *relator* in the Congregation of the Saints, is overburdened. We had to insistently request that he read our documents. Now, it is up to us to edit that enormous 600-page volume, which contains what has been written up to the present time. Robert Bonnafous, the author of the original text, is in the process of finalizing preparations before turning over the volume to the editor.

As soon as we have presented our copies to the Vatican, the cause will be included in the list of those that must be examined. When our turn comes, our cause will first of all be studied by historical experts. Since ours is a historical cause, the study of the documents will take on great importance. If those experts approve it, their opinions and commentaries will be assembled in another chapter, which will also be remitted to those at the Vatican who already have the *Positio*. Similarly, that chapter will be inserted at the beginning of the copies that have been edited but not bound. They will be available to the Viatorian Community.

Afterwards, everything will be seriously studied by the theological experts, who will give a definitive response to any *Dubium* concerning the heroic virtues of Father Querbes. Generally speaking, causes move forward very slowly. It is possible that we will have to wait some time for this study to be completed.

We should also remind you that the work on behalf of the cause is carried out, not only in Rome, but also in the midst of the Christian people, especially among his sons and his daughters, who pray, who gain additional knowledge, and who strengthen themselves with the thoughts and the example of their Founder. There is no doubt that this time of waiting cannot help but be profitable.

Please allow me to sincerely thank Father José Antonio Lezama for this article, which helps us to follow the progress of the cause of our Founder. At the same time, in the name of all Viatorians, I wish to assure Brother Robert Bonnafous of the deep recognition that we owe him for the immense amount of work that he has done in the service of this cause.

This new stage renders homage to both Father Lezama and Brother Bonnafous. May the two of you be aware that the ongoing work that you accomplish does not go unnoticed!

In the name of each and every one of us, I assure you of my gratitude.

Alain Ambeault, c.s.v.,
Superior General

Pastoral Visit of the General Council in Burkina Faso

Between February 25th and March 11th, the Superior General and the members of his council will be in Burkina Faso for their first pastoral visit. This type of visit will involve all the council members, will facilitate discussions, and will make it possible to foresee different ways for follow-up steps to be taken.

Not only will we visit the three places where our confreres live and work, but we will also meet with all of the committees responsible for the life of the foundation and of its apostolic works.